

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 TRSE-00 OMB-01

OC-06 CCO-00 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 ACDA-07 SAM-01 DHA-02

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INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 169

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

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CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

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COMSIXTHFLT

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FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 8546

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION NOVEMBER 20

REF: BEIRUT 8528 (DTG 191432Z NOV 76)

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1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT SARKIS TO GIVE NATIONAL ADDRESS NOV 21.

ASF DEPLOYMENTS IN TRIPOLI AND SIDON NOW EXPECTED BEGIN NOV 21. FIGHTING CONTINUES IN NORTH AND IN SOUTH. SITUATION IN SOUTH TENSE AS RIGHTISTS AND PALESTINAINS REPORTED GATERING FORCES IN MARJAYUN/NABATIYAH/QULAY'A AREAS. POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS CONCERNED ABOUT SOUTHERN SITUATION. JUNBLATT CRITICIZES CERTAIN SYRIAN OCCUPATION POLICIES. ARAFAT CONTINUES TALKS WITH SYRIANS, WHO REPORTED WILLING BEGIN DIALOGUE WITH NATIONAL MOVEMENT. CHARLES MALIK MAY TRAVEL TO US NOV 22. FEUDING VILLAGES OF ZGHORTA AND BCHARRE HAVE RECONCILED. VARIOUS GOVERNMENT OFFICES CALLING FOR CIVIL SERVANTS TO RETURN TO WORK NEXT WEEK. BEIRUT AIRPORT RE-OPENED. SITREPS HEREAFTER ON THRICE-WEEKLY BASIS. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS. PRESIDENT SARKIS WILL MAKE HIS SECOND RADIO/TELEVISION ADDRESS TO NATION ON NOV 21, EVE OF NATIONAL DAY, NOV 22. PRESS SPECULATES HE MIGHT ANNOUNCE FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT, ALTHOUGH WE ARE SKEPTICAL. SALIM AL-HUSS STILL CONSIDERED A LEADING CONTENDER FOR PRIME MINISTER.

3. ASF PHASE III. NEXT ASF DEPLOYMENT PHASE NOW EXPECTED BEGIN NOV 21. ASF EXPECTED DEPLOY IN ZGHORTA, EHDEN, AND THE KURA AS WELL AS TRIPOLI IN THE NORTH AND SIDON IN THE SOUTH.

4. MILITARY SITUATION: THE NORTH. HEAVY EXCHANGE OF ARTILLERY FIRE REPORTED BETWEEN TRIPOLI AND ZGHORTA. AREAS OF RAS MASKA, DAHR AL-AYN AND DAHR MAR YAKUB REMAIN TENSE. NATIONAL MOVEMENT PREDICTING ESCALATION IN FIGHTING BY "ISOLATIONISTS" BEFORE ASF ARRIVAL.

5. MILITARY SITUATION: THE SOUTH. PRESS REPORTS ISRAELI FORCES INCLUDING SOME TANKS CONCENTRATED ON BORDER NEAR KAFR KALA. LARGE NUMBER PRESUMABLY RIGHTIST ARMORED VEHICLES REPORTED BY PRESS ON PERIMETERS OF KAFR KALA, CONCENTRATED AT HADRA AND DAHR MIMAS. L'ORIENT-LE JOUR CLAIMS 1500 RIGHTIST FORCES GATHERED IN MARJAYUN/NABATIYAH/QULAY'A AREA FACING SOME 1000 PALESTINIANS AND LAA. BOTH SIDES HAVE ARMORED VEHICLES.

6. POLITICAL/RELIGIOUS LEADERS CONCERNED ABOUT SOUTHERN SITUATION. KAMAL JUNBLATT AGAIN EMPHASIZED DANGEROUS SITUATION IN SOUTH AND URGED ASF DEPLOY FORCES IN AREA. AL MUHARRIR SAYS JUNBLATT TO HOLD PRESS CONFERENCE TO REVEAL KFUR FRONT PLANS TO CREATE CONFIDENTIAL

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BUFFER ZONE BETWEEN LEBANON AND ISRAEL. SAEB SALAM ALSO RAISED ALARM ABOUT THE SOUTH, AND L'ORIENT-LE JOUR REPORTS SOUTHERN SITUATION MAIN SUBJECT DISCUSSED BY ORATORS AT RELIGIOUS SERVICES IN MOSQUES IN BEIRUT NOV 19.

7. JUNBLATT ON THE SYRIANS. WHILE STILL APPROVING ASF OPERATIONS, JUNBLATT BEGAN POLITICAL ATTACK ON SYRIAN OCCUPATION POLICIES. IN NOV 19 PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT HE QUESTIONED: 1) ALLEGED DETAINMENT

OF 2000 LEBANESE PRISONERS BY SYRIANS AT MASNAA, MEZZE, AND DAMASCUS. 2) SYRIAN CLOSURE OF POLITICAL OFFICES; AND 3) RESTRICTIONS ON LEBANESE NEWSPAPER DISTRIBUTION IN THE BEQAA AND AKAR. NEVERTHELESS, HE GAVE NOD TO "NEW POSITIVE SENTIMENTS" OF SYRIA TOWARD NATIONAL MOVEMENT.

8. PALESTINIAN-SYRIAN DETENTE. YASIR ARAFAT RETURNED BEIRUT NOV 19, HAVING MET WITH SYRIAN FONMIN KHADDAM AND GENERAL JAMIL IN DAMASCUS. AN NAHAR REPORTS ARAFAT-ASAD TOLKS HAVE BROKEN THE ICE IN SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN RELATIONS AND THAT SYRIA HAS EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS RESUME DIALOGUE WITH NATIONAL MOVEMENT. SITUATION IN SOUTH AND SYRIAN RELATIONS WITH JORDAN REPORTEDLY WERE ALSO TOPICS OF DISCUSSION. PLO/SYRIAN TALKS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE.

9. CHARLES MALIK MAY VISIT US AGAIN. AT NOV 19 KFUR FRONT MEETING, INCREASED "DIPLOMATIC" ACTIVITY ABROAD DISCUSSED. CAMILLE CHAMOUN DENIED RUMORS OF VISIT BY CHARLES MALIK TO US, SAYING SUCH VISIT PREMATURE AND MALIK GIVEN NO SUCH MISSION. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, KFUR FRONT SOURCES SAY MALIK TO TRAVEL NOV 22 TO US TO MEET PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER "AND HIS CANDIDATE AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT."

10. MEDIA REUNIFICATION. DIFFICULTIES STILL PERSIST IN REUNITING VARIOUS RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS UNDER GOVERNMENT CONTROL. PRESS REPORTS MINISTRY OF INFORMATION DIRGEN RAMEZ AL-KAZEN IS LEADING OPPOSITION TO COOPERATION BETWEEN AMSHIT AND SANAYEH RADIO STATIONS. THEY STILL ARE INDEPENDENTLY PRODUCING NEWS BROADCASTS. AL MOHARRIR SAY CAMILLE CHAMOUN HAS OBJECTED TO EFFORTS TO UNIFY ELECTRONIC MEDIA. INFORMATION MINISTER TUENI REMAINS ABROAD.

11. ZGHORTA-BCHARRE RECONCILIATION. ANTICIPATED RECONCILIATION BETWEEN FEUDING VILLAGES OF ZGHORTA AND BCHARRE TOOK PLACE AT CEREMONIES IN BOTH VILLAGES NOV. 18 PRESIDED OVER BY MARONITE
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PATRIARCH KHURAYSH AND ATTENDED BY SUCH LEADING FEUDAL FIGURES AS SULEIMAN FRANGIE, CAMILLE CHAMOUN, AND PIERRE GEMAYEL.

12. REACTIVATION OF CIVIL SERVICES. SERIES OF COMMUNIQUE ISSUED NOV 19 CALLING CIVIL SERVANTS BACK TO WORK IN DIRECTORATE OF CUSTOMS, GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEE AFFAIRS, BANK OF LEBANON AND PTT. PORT MANAGEMENT COMPANY ALSO REQUESTED ITS EMPLOYEES TO RESUME WORK NO LATER THAN NOV 23. MIN OF JUSTICE EMPLOYEES TOLD TO RETURN TO THEIR JOBS IN 24 HOURS, AND JUSTICE MINISTER OSSEIRAN TO PRESIDE OVER NOV 20 MEETING OF CHIEF MAGISTRATES AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS OF JUDICIAL SYSTEM. AL MOHARRIR REPORTS PLANS TO ESTABLISH SPECIAL COURTS TO DEAL WITH KIDNAPPING AND OTHER ACTS TENDING TO UNDERMINE GENERAL SECURITY, WITHOUT RIGHT OF APPEAL. IN FOREIGN MINISTRY, AL MOHARRIR REPORTS INTERNAL DISSENTION AGAINST RECENT APPOINTMENTS MADE BY

ACTING FONMIN CHAMOUN.

13. BEIRUT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. FOUR MEA PLANES LANDED
AND TOOK OFF FROM BEIRUT NOV 19, RESUMING AIRPORT OPERATIONS.
AIR FRANCE NOW EXPECTED BEGIN FLIGHTS BETWEEN PARIS AND BEIRUT
NOV 22.

14. NOTE TO SITREP READERS: IN LIGHT OF IMPROVING SECURITY
SITUATION IN LEBANON, EMBASSY BEIRUT WILL HENCEFORTH DISPATCH
SITUATION REPORTS ONLY ON MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS, AND FRIDAYS.
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